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Editor

J. Richard Greenwell

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SEARCH FOR GIANT GECKO INTENSIFIES



Aaron M. Bauer, a Villanova University herpetologist and co-discoverer of the giant gecko, at the ISC Secretariat showing possible giant gecko habitats on North Island, New Zealand, to German herpetologist Gunther Rainer, of Berlin's Museum of Natural History. Recent eyewitness reports from New Zealand have intensified the search for the largest gecko in the world, which is known from only one 19th century specimen.

In 1986, herpetologists Aaron M. Bauer and Anthony P. Russell published a description in the New Zealand Journal of Zoology of a new reptile species: the giant gecko. They named it *Hoplodactylus delcourti*. With a length of 622mm (just over 2 feet), it is by far the largest gecko ever known to have lived (see Newsletter, Spring, 1988). However, the origins of the specimen -- housed in the Marseille Natural History Museum, in France -- was unknown, there is no other known specimen, and no living zoologist is known to have ever seen the animal alive.

This may all sound like a cryptozoologist's dream, but it's all true. And there's more. Based on their anatomical analysis, Dr. Bauer, at Villanova University, in Pennsylvania, and Dr. Russell, at Canada's University of Calgary, were

able to establish that the gecko had probably originally come from New Zealand, where 19th century French naturalists and explorers are known to have been active.

And as if all this were not enough, there is another exciting twist to the story: there is a mythical animal of New Zealand Maori folklore known as the *kawekawau*. It was said to be a semi-arboreal, reptile-like animal about the size of a man's thigh. In a subsequent paper in the journal Ethnobiology, Drs. Bauer and Russell proposed that the two animals -- the giant gecko and the *kawekawau* -- are one and the same, and, furthermore, that the animal may still survive in pristine forest in northern North Island, New Zealand.

If the giant gecko is, in fact, the

kawekaweau of New Zealand, and if it is ever discovered alive, it would be the first time in zoological history that a species has been scientifically described from a single, incomplete specimen of uncertain geographical origin, linked to a mythical animal in a specific far-off region, searched for in that region, and then found alive. It would be a brilliant cryptozoological coup. What are the chances of this actually happening? Better than was originally thought, it seems. In publishing their 1986 description, Drs. Bauer and Russell stated that "the greatest hope for obtaining additional information lies in creating an awareness of the existence and significance of this unique specimen." This awareness has certainly come about over the past 4 years, and has recently led to the first eyewitness reports from observers which indicate that the reptile may still survive.

The latest chapter in the saga began in early 1990, when the National Museum of New Zealand was setting up a special exhibition titled "Forgotten Fauna--New Zealand's Amphibians and Reptiles," as part of that nation's sesquicentennial celebrations. It was felt that the giant gecko would be a particularly appropriate centerpiece for the exhibit, which was to run from February 24 to May 27, and a request was made to the Marseille Natural History Museum for loan of the specimen. After lengthy negotiations--including the taking out of a high insurance premium--the specimen finally arrived in Wellington

in early March accompanied by no less than Michele Duron, director of the Marseille museum.

The exhibition was a big success and drew many thousands of visitors. The giant gecko's "return" to New Zealand created a storm of media publicity--resulting in the first actual modern sighting reports from New Zealanders. The New Zealand press began reporting the sightings in late March, and The Gisborne Herald described Museum staff as "stunned at the possibility that the Maori legend of *kawekaweau* may now be a living legend." Museum assistant director James Mack was quoted as describing the reptile's possible survival as "mind-boggling."

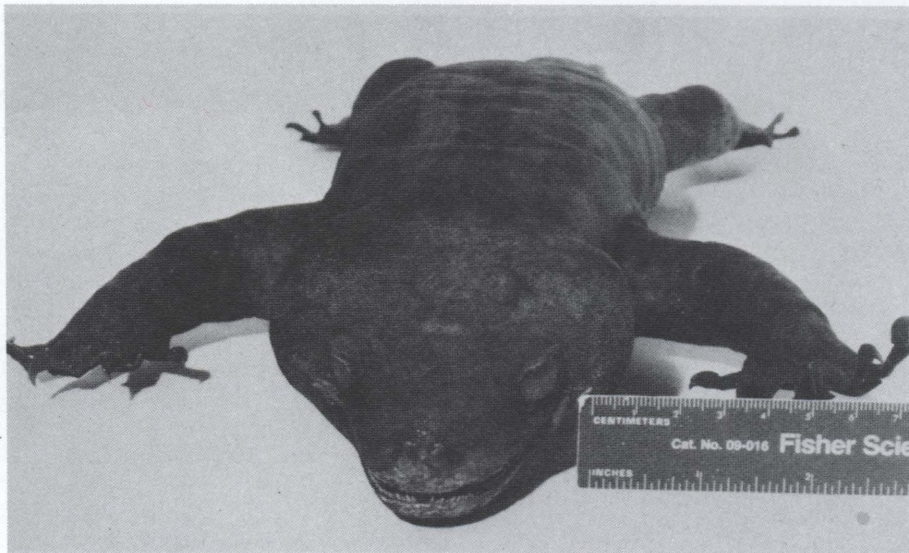
After the first reports were published, other witnesses came forward. Perhaps significantly, all the reports emanated from the region of Gisborne, on the central east coast of North Island, and most of the witnesses were quite unknown to each other. Furthermore, with few native terrestrial vertebrates--and no known native land mammals at all--there are few New Zealand animals that could have confused the witnesses. Some of the sightings had taken place many years before, without the witnesses realizing that there was anything that significant about the animals seen. One witness, Joe McClutchie, claimed two sightings: one in the late 1960's and another in the early 1980's. Another witness reported that a photograph had

been taken of a specimen struck by a car over 10 years before--but the location of the photograph is unknown. McClutchie and Murray Seymour, another Gisborne resident, started collecting such eyewitness reports, which they sent on to the National Museum.

As the number of reports generated by the exhibit increased, National Museum officials decided that an investigation was warranted. Thus, in early April, two staff herpetologists, Tony Whitaker and Bruce Thomas, proceeded to the Gisborne area, where they met McClutchie and Seymour, interviewed witnesses--both white and native Maori--and investigated possible habitats. However, they returned to Wellington skeptical. They were unswayed by the anecdotal accounts, but told the press they were "prepared to reconsider if something worthwhile comes up." The animal's ultimate discovery, said Whitaker, "would be a major find, a major discovery for the world."

Some time after their return, Whitaker and Thomas prepared an official report of their field visit and their conclusions. Titled "Large Lizard Sightings in the Gisborne Region: Report on a National Museum Investigation, 7-11 April 1990," the 23-page document reviews what is known of the mythical *kawekaweau*, covers the discovery of the Marseille specimen, and goes on to describe the sighting reports. The reports they investigated were as follows:

- * Joe McClutchie: two sightings, in the late 1960's and early 1980's. In the first sighting, while driving at night, he clearly saw a reptile for several seconds in the car's headlights at a distance of 50-65 feet (15-20 m). In the second sighting, he again clearly saw a reptile in his headlights for several seconds, this time from of a distance of only about 16 feet (5 m). Both times, the reptile was thought to be about 18-24 inches (45-60 cm) in length.
- * Gordon Lockwood: in the mid-1960's. In mid-afternoon, while driving, he and his wife observed a reptile ahead of them; unable to break in time, the car went over it. He stopped the car, got out, and approached it, hoping to capture it with a sack. When he got within 10



The type specimen--and the only specimen--of the giant gecko, found in a French Museum and thought to be New Zealand's mythical *kawekaweau* of Maori folklore. (Marseille Natural History Museum.)

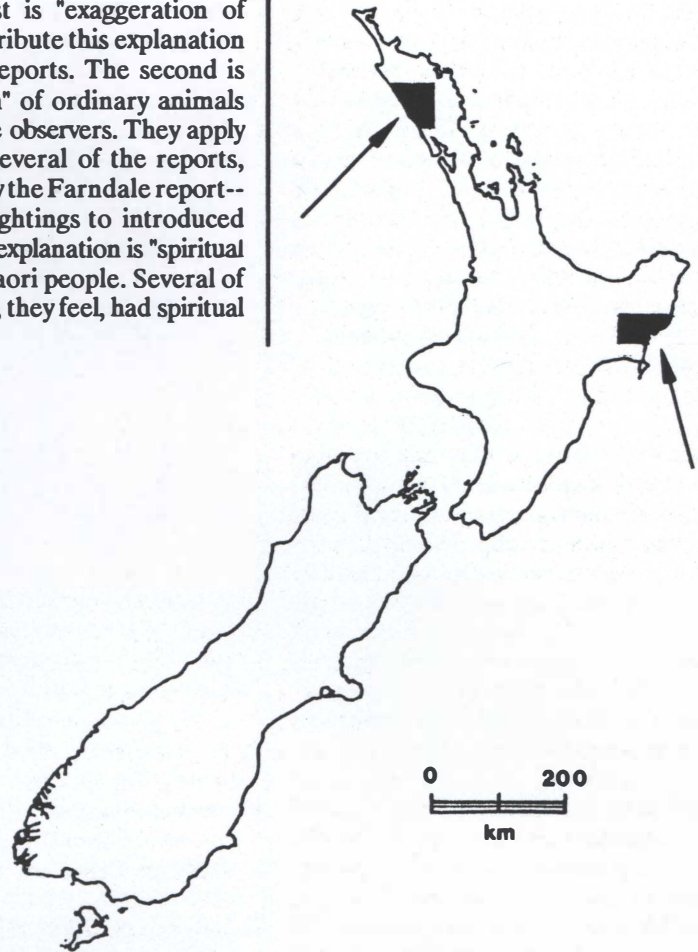
feet (3 m) of it, the reptile made off into tall grass. He described it as about 2 feet, 7 inches (80 cm) in length and "like a goanna" (monitor lizard).

- * Neil Farndale: late 1970's. He was a passenger in a car with two other people (names not remembered). At dusk, with headlights on, they rounded a corner, suddenly saw a reptile, and accidentally hit it with the car. It was dead upon inspection. He remembers somebody getting a camera out of the car and taking a picture of it before it was thrown off the side of the road. He described it as about 18-24 inches (45-60 cm) in length.
- * Haki Raroa: early 1980's. He was cutting scrub with a chain saw in the Waipare Highlands when he saw a large lizard sitting on the base of a tree. He became frightened, left the area, and would not work there again. He described it as about 20 inches (50 cm) long.
- * Ann Waitai: January, 1990. While driving with a passenger in the early evening (still light in the Southern Hemisphere), a reptile was seen crossing the road. She stopped the car, but the passenger did not see it. It was described as about 40 inches (1 m) in length, and looked "like an oversized gecko."
- * Brian Griffiths: October, 1988. While driving with his son, he clearly observed an animal crossing the road for about 5-8 seconds. He is not very familiar with lizards, but described it as having large eyes, a short head, a "tail coming off the body," and hairless. He estimated its length at about 16 inches (40 cm). His son did not see it.

In addition to these seven reports from six witnesses, Whitaker and Thomas obtained further information directly or indirectly from nine other persons. Much of this information was vague--some of it childhood memories of giant lizards by Maori informants.

In their conclusions, Whitaker and Thomas note how "the whole field of cryptozoology is fraught with problems," and go on to address three possible

non-giant gecko explanations for the reports. The first is "exaggeration of size", and they attribute this explanation to some of the reports. The second is "misidentification" of ordinary animals not familiar to the observers. They apply this solution to several of the reports, including possibly the Farndale report--attributing the sightings to introduced ferrets. The third explanation is "spiritual beliefs" by the Maori people. Several of the Maori reports, they feel, had spiritual components.



Map of New Zealand, the probable abode of the giant gecko--if it survives. Arrow on right indicates area of recently reported sightings investigated by National Museum staff. Arrow on left indicates suitable habitat identified by Aaron Bauer and Anthony Russell.

Finally, the investigators address the question of a possible surviving giant gecko. They concede, almost reluctantly it seemed, that the McClutchie, Lockwood, and Farndale sightings "are the most difficult to explain by anything other than the acceptance of large lizards or lizard-like reptiles." They then review three such possibilities: the persistence (or recent release) of the tuatara; the release and possible establishment of some other exotic reptile; or that "there is a hitherto unrecognized indigenous lizard present."

They consider the possibility of a surviving mainland tuatara population "negligible," and the descriptions were not of a tuatara in any case. As for other--probably Australian-- reptiles being introduced, "to suggest...an

established population of an exotic species would be unrealistic."

Finally, they address the survival of the *kawekawau*--the giant gecko--as an explanation, concluding that: "Given the long history of settlement on the East Coast, the high level of human use, the possibility of the *kawekawau* or a similar-sized lizard surviving to the present are [sic] extremely unlikely, let alone surviving undetected." They note that appropriate habitats such as boulder banks, cliff faces, or large creviced trees are not common in the Gisborne area. Some original forest still occurs there, but as for such reptiles surviving in canopy, "the likelihood of a very large, canopy-inhabiting lizard escaping detection through 150 years of forest clearance for timber and agriculture is

virtually impossible."

After painting this pessimistic picture, Whitaker and Thomas conclude: "...unless new information comes to light which would provide further support for the past or continued presence of large lizards on the East Coast, further field work is not justified." A disappointing ending to the investigation, particularly when they earlier admitted that the McClutchie, Lockwood, and Farndale reports were "...difficult to explain by anything other than the acceptance of large lizards..."

While the National Museum has withdrawn from further active investigation, McClutchie and Seymour are continuing with their own tracking down of reports and searching for the animal itself. As in other areas of cryptozoology, a definitive answer to the question of the giant gecko's existence can probably only occur through the provision of a specimen, alive or dead, which--now that the word is out--could happen at any time.

Meanwhile, Bauer and Russell, more optimistic than Whitaker and Thomas, have their own plans--in a completely different part of New Zealand. As specialists on the herpetofauna of the Pacific, they have visited New Zealand from time to time, and as early as 1988



Trunk and crown of a large kauri tree, *Agathis australis*, in the Waipoua Forest Sanctuary. Note the columnar trunk and the height of the first branches. (Aaron M. Bauer.)

they were already surveying North Island for possible likely areas to search for the beast. Although they believe that the reptile once inhabited South Island (see their article in *Cryptozoology*, Vol. 7), and may still do so, they think the evidence is better for North Island, a supposition since supported by the Gisborne reports.

During their 1988 visit, Bauer and Russell visited Northland (see map), an area--according to 19th century literature --supposedly inhabited by the *kawekaweau*. They started from the premise that, based on 19th century folklore and reports, the *kawekaweau* inhabits large forest trees, such as rata, and that their association with the canopy of little-visited virgin forest stands could explain their continued survival undetected by zoology. During their 3-day excursion, Bauer and Russell, accompanied by local collaborator Grant Macredie, traveled from Auckland to Dargaville, and on to the Waipoua Forest Sanctuary, which lies between the Waoku Plateau and the coast. They also visited the Waima Forest. (Their field-work and conclusions have been written up as a Field Report, which is now in press in Vol. 9 of *Cryptozoology*.)

These forests, which receive more than 71 inches (1,800mm) of rain a year, were thought to represent good habitats for the giant gecko. The Waipoua Sanctuary contains the largest existing stand of kauri forest in New Zealand. The kauri tree, which can live for hundreds of years, is the largest in the country, with girths over 50 feet (15 m), and heights of over 160 feet (50 m). They do not branch below about 40 feet (12 m), and the canopy of the largest such tree is estimated to cover an area of about 11,600 square feet (1,078 sq. m).

Such trees might serve as an excellent refugium for the *kawekaweau*, explaining why they are rarely seen. Furthermore, the Waipoua Forest has been protected by the government since 1876, and was not even accessible by road until the 1920's. Thus, it has been subject to minimal human disturbance.

In their *Cryptozoology* Field Report, Bauer and Russell describe the canopy of the kauri forest as "an immense, three dimensionally complex and almost

completely inaccessible habitat... [which] appears suitable to support a large gecko species." And "while there is no direct evidence to link the *kawekaweau* to the canopy, the connection is plausible, and the canopy is perhaps the most likely zone for locating living specimens." Another factor which would make the canopy a likely habitat is the giant gecko's survival at all. Much of New Zealand's fauna was devastated by 19th century introductions of alien species, and many think that such large lizards could simply not have survived the predatory activities of introduced mammals, such as cats. The canopy, however, would provide sanctuary from such alien predators.

Since their visit to Northland, Bauer and Russell have been informed by Macredie that some eyewitnesses have been located in that area, although details are still lacking. They plan to return to New Zealand before long, and hope to undertake a thorough survey of sighting reports, with special emphasis on the testimony of the Maori people. Actual searches might also be conducted, the most effective method, they think, being search teams spotlighting the canopy at night.

The giant gecko has come a long way since its presence was first noted in the Marseille museum only a few years ago. At that time, nobody had any idea what it represented or where it came from. Through their cryptozoological detective work, Drs. Bauer and Russell might bring the mythical Maori *kawekaweau* to life, and with it a new appreciation of species survival. For not only can species be very fragile and susceptible to ecological change and human impact: in ways we still do not fully understand --and sometimes don't want to--it seems that some species can also be very hardy and resilient, surviving through it all.

"We do not know one millionth of one percent about anything."

Thomas Edison
American inventor

"...in the end, all we hope to reach is a high standard of compromise."

Joseph Cotten
American actor

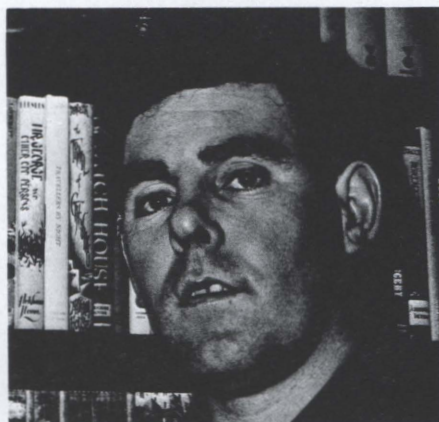
MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

All good things come to an end, and with this issue of the newsletter the end has come for Wood's Animal Facts. This column, which has graced the back page of the newsletter since the Autumn, 1983, issue, has been abstracted--with kind permission--from the third edition of ISC member Gerald L. Wood's book The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, published in England in 1982.

The column's texts have been selected because of their particular relevance to cryptozoology, and have generally covered such things as "the largest," "the heaviest," "the longest," etc. of the Animal Kingdom. We have avoided performance curiosities, such as "the fastest," "the slowest," etc.

In chronological order, the column has covered the following 30 different "superlatives" over the past seven years:

- the largest living terrestrial mammal (the African bush elephant);
- the largest and bulkiest living fish (the whale shark);
- the largest living bird (the ostrich);
- the largest living chelonian (the Pacific leatherback turtle);
- the largest living reptile (the saltwater crocodile);
- the largest living carnivorous fish (the great white shark);
- the largest living lizard (the Komodo dragon monitor);
- the largest wingspread of any living bird (the wandering albatross);
- the tallest living animal (the giraffe);
- the largest living amphibian (the Chinese salamander);
- the largest and heaviest mammal in the world--and the largest marine animal ever recorded (the blue whale);
- the largest known living invertebrate (the giant squid);
- the largest living fish which spends its whole life in fresh water (the *pa beuk wels*, *lau lau*, and *pirahya* catfishes, and the *arapaima*);
- the largest living terrestrial carnivore (the Kodiak [brown] bear);
- the largest living frog (the goliath frog);
- the largest living sturgeon (the Russian "beluga");
- the heaviest living flying bird (the



Gerald L. Wood

- Kori bustard);
- the longest and bulkiest living snake (the anaconda);
- the largest living felid (the Manchurian or Amur tiger);
- the heaviest living raptor (the Andean condor);
- the largest known octopus (the North Pacific *Octopus apollyon*);
- the longest--but not bulkiest--living lizard (the Salvadori monitor);
- the largest living primate (the mountain gorilla);
- the largest known bony fish (the ocean sunfish);
- the largest living marsupial (the red kangaroo);
- the largest living pinniped (the southern elephant seal);
- the largest living deer (the Alaskan moose);
- the largest living marine bird (the emperor penguin);
- the largest living rodent (the capybara--this issue);
- the largest living bat (the Bismarck flying fox--this issue).

Over the years, a few members have questioned the inclusion of the column, stating that it was not sufficiently cryptozoological. While this may be so, the information documented by Mr. Wood provides the researcher with benchmark parameters with which to compare his or her cryptozoological data, and, if for no other reason than that, I think that the column was justified. In fact, interesting letters and discussions have sometimes ensued from the column.

Now that it is ending, I would like to extend our thanks to Mr. Wood for allowing us to abstract from his book. We will miss you, Wood's Animal Facts; you served your purpose well.

Readers may also have recently noticed a slight revamping of the newsletter. The use of a laser printer--courtesy of the University of Arizona--has improved its visual appearance, and we have increased the amount of print space without cramming the pages too much.

Finally, while on the subject of the newsletter's format, I would like to add a comment about the small quote boxes. A few members have protested the inclusion of such quotes. One member even suggested once that it is a terrible waste of space and money. The fact is that these quotes serve as "fillers" where there would otherwise only be a blank space. During the paste-up phase of newsletter production, it is often found that a particular article is a little too long or too short for a given space. If it is too long, some lines can often be cut, but if it is too short, these pre-printed quotes solve the problem by filling the required space.

Quotes are collected from a wide range of sources, and I select those which I think readers will enjoy; those of scientific or philosophical interest hopefully give pause for thought; others provide some humor. New quotes are always welcome from readers, who should include, if possible, the published sources.

I hope members will continue to enjoy the newsletter, and also to express their views. Letters for publication are always very welcome.

J. Richard Greenwell
Editor

"True science teaches, above all, to doubt and to be ignorant."

Miguel de Unamuno
Spanish philosopher

"Beware of false knowledge; it is more dangerous than ignorance."

George Bernard Shaw
British playwright

NESSIE BIBLIOGRAPHY AVAILABLE

A comprehensive bibliography listing books, articles, news clippings, and miscellaneous documents about the search for the Loch Ness Monster--and the controversy over its existence--has been compiled by ISC member Henry H. Bauer, a leading authority on the history of Nessie and the author of the book The Enigma of Loch Ness: Making Sense of a Mystery (University of Illinois Press, 1986). The bibliography now contains over 4,700 entries.

Since a printed version would be voluminous, the bibliography is maintained on computer diskettes. Interested researchers may obtain these from Dr. Bauer, a professor of chemistry at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

The catalogue serves as a subject index as well as a bibliographic listing. Each item is characterized by a number of keywords that describe the content; for example, "AAS" means that the item reports something about the Academy of Applied Science; "ATTRACT" charac-

terizes attempts to bring Nessies to view by using bait, pheromones, music, or whatever. About 400 keywords are currently used. Some of them have a bibliographic purpose, to indicate, for example, whether the item is in English or not, and whether it is a magazine or book or newspaper item.

The information can be read with a personal computer that accepts 5¼-inch diskettes. Dr. Bauer uses Digital Equipment *Rainbow* PCs which operate on the CP/M system, but individuals who use DOS (e.g., on IBM-compatible computers) can obtain software that enables their PC to emulate the CP/M, such as 22NICE and 22DISK developed by Sydex (153 N. Murphy Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086, U.S.A.). Dr. Bauer now also has DOS computer, and eventually will prepare diskettes on that system too.

Opening and viewing the files allows one to browse through the bibliography by author of book, or title of magazine, or date of newspaper item. To make use of the keywords--i.e., to find items about

"AAS" or "ATTRACT" or "CAPTURE," and so forth--one employs the software SUPERFILE, or later version FYI3000 available for both DOS and CP/M systems, from Software Marketing Associates (Austin, TX 787746, U.S.A., tel. 512/327-3091). Dr. Bauer recommends it to anybody wanting a very simple indexing system for any cataloguing job; it is much easier to use than a database system, it is fast, and it has ample capacity. He says the simplicity of the system is such that even if one uses it only infrequently--say, every few months--one does not need to relearn anything.

Interested members may write to Dr. Bauer for a full description of the bibliography. This description discusses the scope and coverage of the collection, and lists all the keywords. Dr. Bauer is also willing to provide copies of the diskettes--nine in total--in exchange for new ones (5¼-inch, 80 track, double-density). The address is: Dr. Henry H. Bauer, Chemistry 0212, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA 24061, U.S.A. □

EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT CLOSED

After six years of operation, the Society's European Secretariat has been closed. The Secretariat has been operated out of Prangins, Switzerland, by Ned Winn, who is soon to retire to North America. The Secretariat has served several functions, particularly in allowing European members to renew through a local address.

With new, flexible banking rules in the U.S.A., most European members may now pay their dues by personal cheque in local currency--or by £ Sterling Eurocheque--directly to the main Secretariat in Arizona without bank charges being applied (see separate article, this issue). When fully centralized, renewal processing will be more efficient, requiring less manpower and resulting in fewer processing errors.

The other benefit of a European Secretariat has been the availability of back publications in Europe itself, as surface mailings from Arizona to Europe can take two months or more. This convenience will continue, but the publications stock will be maintained in

the United Kingdom, which has the second largest Society membership. As of July, 1991, back publications should be ordered from: Sally C. Parsons, 27 Enys Road, Flat 3, Eastbourne, East Sussex, England BN21 2DG, U.K.

Payment should accompany all orders sent to Ms. Parsons, preferably in US\$ or £ Sterling. Newsletters sell for \$3 or £1.75, and journals for \$18 or £11. Postage costs are already included. U.K. members may pay by personal cheque in £. Continental members should pay by £ Eurocheque (Eurocheques in other currencies cannot be accepted), although members in France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, and Switzerland may pay the equivalent by personal cheque in their own currency--provided the exchange rate current at the time is used.

A special note of appreciation goes to Dr. Winn. He has served the European membership diligently over the years, and the staff at the main Secretariat in Arizona and Ms. Parsons in England will strive hard to emulate his example. □

FORTHCOMING IN 1991

Articles in preparation for 1991 newsletters are on the following topics:

- * A review of major discoveries and rediscoveries of species around the world in the 1980's;
- * An annotated bibliography of all cryptozoologically related books published since 1987 (postponed from 1990);
- * An examination of the evidence for thylacines on mainland Australia (postponed from 1990);
- * The proceedings of the panel discussion held at the Society's Sasquatch Symposium, in June, 1989;
- * Update on the Bermuda Blob;
- * Update on the pygmy elephant;
- * And, of course, lots, lots more, including letters and editorials. □

CRYPTIDS ON CANADIAN STAMPS

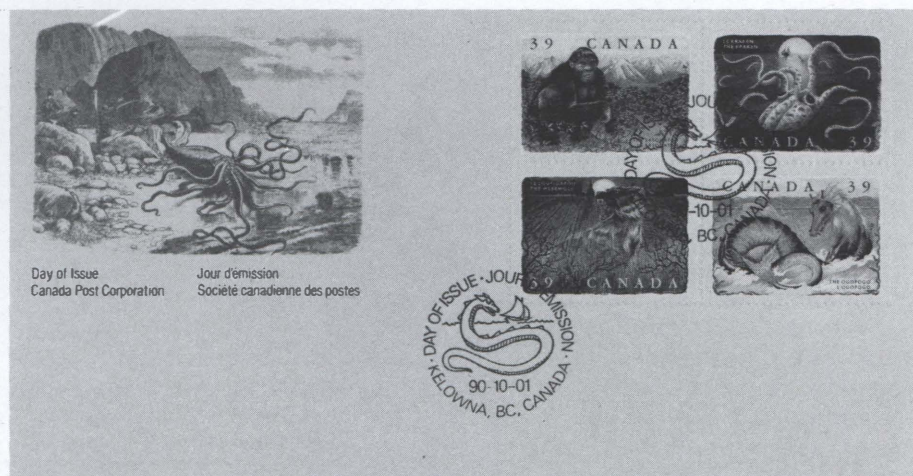
Canada Post Corp., the Canadian postal agency, released a set of four new stamps on October 1, 1990, three of which feature cryptozoological animals: the Sasquatch (Bigfoot), Ogopogo (the Lake Okanagan monster), and the Kraken (now known to be the giant squid). The fourth stamp features the *loup-garou* (the French-Canadian werewolf).

Billed as the *Legendary Creatures* stamps--each worth C39 cents--they are sponsored by McDonald's Restaurants of Canada, Ltd. McDonald's offered two different mini-albums, each holding two of the stamps, as children's "treats of the week" during October, which was designated Stamp Collecting Month. Canada Post also released an official first day cover and a souvenir edition with a book for parents and children. The first day cover, with an October 1, 1990, cancellation at Kelowna, Lake Okanagan, bears all four stamps, and features an engraving of a giant squid from the *Canadian Illustrated News* of October 27, 1877 (National Archives Canada/C 66125).

The stamps were designed by Ralph Tibbles, and illustrated by Alan Cormak and Deborah Drew-Brook. Canada

Post's national media relations manager, Carole-Marie Allard, told *Linn's Stamp News* that the McDonald's sponsorship was to help introduce children to stamp collecting. Concern exists over the fact that 50 percent of Canada's stamp collectors are over age 35. The *Legendary Creatures* set is the first in a series commemorating Canadian folklore. Future sets will depict folktales and folksongs.

ISC members wishing to acquire these items may write to John Kirk, who has available the four stamp sets for \$5, and the commemorative covers for \$6 (U.S. or C\$). His address is: 1194 Robson St., Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada V6E 1B2. Members may also write to National Philatelic Center, Canada Post Corp., Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada B2G 2R8. Tel: 800/ 565-4362 (domestic), 902/863-6550 (abroad). □



*Canada Post's commemorative cover of October 1, 1990, depicting four *Legendary Creatures*: Sasquatch (Bigfoot), Ogopogo (the Lake Okanagan monster), the Kraken (giant squid), and the loup-garou, the French-Canadian werewolf.*

SUSTAINING MEMBERS, 1990

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that 186 members added donations to their 1990 membership payments, thus becoming Sustaining Members for the year, and setting a new record--surpassing the previous record of 156 recorded for 1988. To us here at the Secretariat, this is a very encouraging sign, and we cannot help but feel that we must be doing something right. Certainly, despite financial crises and late publications, it appears that the membership is solidly behind the Society and what it represents.

Total 1990 membership was about 800, the same as in 1989--after a drop from 860 in 1988 when dues were increased from \$25 or £15 Sterling to \$30 or £18. Unfortunately, higher printing costs in 1990 and new U.S. Postal Service rate increases going

into effect in 1991 will eat up most of the Society's added income from the dues increase. Thus, donations from Sustaining Members continue to be critical for covering Society publishing and operational expenses.

The listing of 1990 Sustaining Members will be broken down into three categories: Category 1 will include members who donated up to \$29 or £17 above the membership fee (total payment up to \$59 or £35); Category 2 will include members who donated between \$30 and \$99 or between £18 and £58 (total payment between \$60 and \$129 or £36 and £76); and Category 3 will include those generous members who donated \$100--or £59--or more (total payment at least \$130 or £77).

Category 1 includes 134 members,

compared to 103 in 1989; Category 2 includes 35 members, compared to 20 in 1989; and Category 3 includes 17 members, compared to 5 in 1989. For reporting purposes, joint members are counted as one. Where non-U.S. currency was involved, the listing reflects amounts credited to the Society after conversion to U.S. dollars (and the deduction of any bank charges). Thus, a member donating \$100 Canadian, for example, would be listed in Category 2.

The listing includes only those members who donated in--or for--1990. It does not include members who may have already donated for 1991.

Category 1

Richard Adair, Victor Albert, Chad Arment, Robert Ash, Greg Aten, Ronald Banister, Aaron Bauer, Wally

Bellows, Giorgio Brancaglion, James Brewer, Michael Bridge, Walter Brundage, Brett Brunner, Alejandro Carrillo, Wayne Cermak, Kenji Chono, Loren Coleman, John Conley, Charles Cordier, Helen Coston, David de Lucca, Gregory Deyermenjian, Paul Dini, Franziska Dokter, Terrance Doloughty, Michael Dunn, George Earley, (Sister) Elizabeth, Hilary Evans, Jean-Francois Ferrary, Randy Garlipp, Dan Gettinger, Gary Gieseke, Daniel Gilbert, Shirley Gipson, Jane Goodall, Benoit Grison.

Tom Hardy, Marion Hebner, John Heckman, James Hewkin, Richard Hobbs, Peter Hocking, Brian Honsowetz, John Howarth, Kevin Hoxsey, Keith Hunter, Christine Janis, James Jeffery, I.D. Johns, Abe Johnson, Michael Johnson, Joseph Joyce, John Karlsson, Eugene Kinkead, John Kirk and John Kirk, Jr., Frederick Kolbe, Jan Koniarek, Gia Koontz, Grover Krantz and Diane Horton, Shane Lea, Choong Kheong Leong, Eric Liljequist, Albert Lopez, Perry Lucas, Frank Lynch, John Maliwacki, David Mandley, Gary Mangiacopra, M. 't Mannetje, Vladimir Markotic, Richard Martin (Massachusetts), Adrienne Mayor, Nick Metskas, J.W. Miller, Marc Miller, Charles Minderhout, Countess of Moray, Shinichiro Namiki, J.R. Nielander, Thomas Oleson, G.L. Payne, Marc Pechenart, Ian Peters, William Pietrzak, Michael Playfair, Nicholas Pope, Raffaella Marisa Porrari, Carl Potts, Michael Pugliese.

Peter Rae, Michel Raynal, Herman Reichenbach, L.S. Rickard, Frederik Roest, Ronald Rosenblatt, Eileen Roy, Michael Rugg, John Rumierz, Frederick Sandborg, Earl Scarr, John Scheel, Stephen Shipe, Richard Smith, Curt Sutherly, Joe Swatek,

Tokuharu Takabayashi, Robert Takaroff, Rudi Tanner, Franco Tassi, David Taylor, Peter Taylor, Charles Thomas, Daniel Thompson, Mark Thorsland, Fabrice Tortey, Gavin Troster, Rich Unsbee, Henry Van Epp, Dick Venema, Thomas Von Lietzau, Chris Walas, Gilbert Wald, Stephen Walker, Keith Walsh, Osamu Watanabe, Michael Weissmann, Josh West, Clinton Williams, H.J. Williams, Thomas Williams, Forrest Wood, Malcolm Woollard, Joseph Zarzynski and Pat Meaney.

Category 2

Mark Angelcyk, Francis Bernard, Bruce and Beverly Burgess, E.P. Busser, Kenneth Chan, Darryl Coon, Alex Downs III, Neil Durnan, John Green (Honorary Member), Wally Hund, Geoffrey Hunt, Peter Jaszi, Sean Johnston, Donald Kellar, Russ Kinne, Peter Kirkham, Lawrence Kubacki, Nicolas Le Souef, Michael and Rebecca Manyak, Richard Martin (Georgia), Dirk Mattheisen, Robert Moy, Paul McCarthy (California), Michael McGovern, Jean Palesi, Bruce and Jannie Rivera, Adam Rowen, Ennio Scannapieco, John Schaefer, Austin Sheatsley, Michael Shields, Ted Straiton, Gilbert Wald, Brent Wilcox, Thomas Wilkinson.

Category 3

Daniel Bloch, Eugenie Clark, Nancy Blair Cooke, Peter Crall, William Dragovan, Dennis Glavin, Ralph Hare, Richard Heiden, Paul LeBlond and Annette Shaw, Roy Mackal, Peter Pranis, Gale Raymond (Benefactor), Jeffrey Short, Bob Titmus (Honorary Member), Anders Tullberg, Kurt Von Nieda (Benefactor), Ned Winn (Benefactor).

To all these members, a hearty thank you. A special thanks must also go to Benefactors Gus Buder, Robert Dorion, Hugh Trotti, and Count F.Z. Zedlitz for additional significant support during 1990.

Although the Society is not losing members, it has not reached the needed 1,000 membership. Further promotions and a new mass mailing to former members in 1991 will hopefully push the total membership closer to the 1,000 mark.

It is also hoped that the number of Sustaining Members in 1991 will again increase and break a new record. The goal is being set at 200 persons making such voluntary contributions, however small. (If a member prefers not to be listed, such a request would, of course, be honored). Those who may have already renewed for 1991 may send in an extra donation at any time in the year for their membership to be upgraded to Sustaining Member status. The 1991 categories will remain unchanged: Category 1, donations up to \$29 (or £17); Category 2, donations between \$30 (or £18) and \$99 (or £58); and Category 3, donations of at least \$100 (or £59).

Members with an interest--and the means--to help the Society substantially are invited to become Benefactors. This requires a one-time payment of \$1,000 (or £590), and includes a membership for life. Interested members should contact the Secretary.

All donations are tax-deductible to American members. The Society's IRS Tax Identification No. is 94-2915129. □

MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

A recent proposal made by the Editor and approved by the Board of Directors is the surveying of all ISC members on what they like and don't like about the Society, in particular the publications.

For this purpose, a special questionnaire has been designed, and is inserted in this issue of the newsletter. All

members are asked to spend a minute or two completing the questionnaire, which may then be returned to the Secretariat with their renewal payment. By this method, the cost of the survey will be negligible to the Society.

It is very important for the Secretariat--and the Board--to know precisely

what members think, what their priorities are, and whether they approve of the quality and content of the publications. Some members probably prefer the newsletter, others the journal; some may find the publications too academic and stuffy, while others may think they are not scholarly enough. Almost all the publications over the years have appeared late, due to chronic financial difficulties, and some members, including

some Board members, believe this is of great concern to most of the membership. Others have expressed the opinion that the timeliness of the publications is far less important than their quality.

What the survey is intended to do is determine exactly what most of the members think--and want. Thus, it is

very important that as many questionnaires as possible be returned. Even those members who are not renewing in 1991 for whatever reason are requested to return the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope.

If you have thoughts about the Society, now is the time to express them! □

RENEWAL INFORMATION

This is the last newsletter for 1990, and membership renewals for 1991 are now due. Prompt renewals reduce the time, energy, and cost of mailing subsequent renewal reminders, so members are urged to act as soon as possible.

All members, regardless of location, are requested to use the convenient renewal-return envelope inserted herein. This increases renewal processing efficiency at the Secretariat, saves time, and reduces errors. Most processing errors are due to this renewal notice not being used. Members are requested to remove the special peel-off address label from the back page of the newsletter, and to affix it to the indicated place on the renewal notice. Non-U.S. members will find the label on the large mailing envelope enclosing the newsletter. (If the label becomes lost, the entry may be done by hand). Address errors or changes should be indicated.

The 1991 membership fee remains unchanged at US\$30 (or £18 Sterling)--this includes the receipt of four newsletters and one annual journal. Donations, however small, are greatly appreciated, and are, in fact, indispensable to help meet Society expenses. Any donation at all makes the contributor a Sustaining Member for the year, and he or she will be so listed in the Winter, 1991, newsletter. There are three categories of Sustaining Membership (see separate article, this issue). The number of Sustaining Members in 1990 was 186--the highest ever. The goal for 1991 is to reach 200.

All members are also requested to complete and return the enclosed survey questionnaire in the renewal-return envelope (see separate article, this issue). This questionnaire has been designed to determine the interests and priorities of the membership. If a member is not

renewing in 1991 for some reason, his or her views are still sought, so the return of the questionnaire is requested regardless of the member's renewal intention.

Instructions To U.S. Members.

American members may pay in U.S. dollars by personal check (which must be drawn against a U.S. bank), money order (postal or otherwise), or traveler's checks. Although not recommended, cash is also acceptable.

Instructions To Non-U.S. Members.

With more flexible banking rules in the U.S.A.--particularly in regard to Europe--most members in other countries will now find it far easier--and less expensive--to pay their annual dues. The following methods of payment may now be used:

- * Bank draft for US\$30, drawn against a U.S. bank (the member will be charged bank fees, however). *Note: only drafts drawn against a U.S. bank will be accepted.*
- * International postal money order for US\$30 (there may be additional charges, depending on the country of origin).
- * Cash in the form of US\$30 or £18 Sterling (not encouraged, but acceptable).
- * Personal cheque for £18, drawn against a British bank (there will be no bank charges). British members may also pay in £ Sterling through an annual standing banker's order every March--the appropriate form may be requested from the Secretariat.

* Members in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, and Switzerland may now pay by personal cheque in their own currency (without incurring bank charges) provided that the equivalent of US\$30--using the exchange rate current at the time--is sent.

* Members in all other European countries may now pay by Eurocheque in £ Sterling, provided the amount of £18 is sent (no bank charges are involved). *Note: only Eurocheques for £ Sterling will be accepted.*

All dues should be sent to the Secretariat in Tucson, and be made payable to the Society. (The European Secretariat is no longer operating-- see separate article, this issue).

In summary, the Secretariat requests that all members:

- renew promptly, using one of the above methods of payment;
- add a voluntary donation--however small;
- use the enclosed renewal-return envelope and special label;
- indicate any name and address correction or change;
- complete and return the enclosed survey questionnaire.

These new methods of payment will make it much easier--and less expensive--for non-U.S. members to send in their dues, and will also increase the efficiency of renewal processing at the Secretariat.

"Already in 1900 I could boast to have written as many books as Moses, and I have not stopped writing them since, except when momentarily interrupted by war."

Winston S. Churchill
British statesman and wartime prime minister.

"Life would be practically impossible on the globe if there existed 20 or 30 Dalis. But there is nothing to fear. That can never happen."

Salvador Dali
Spanish surrealist painter

NEWS & NOTES

News and Notes is a regular column which carries brief news capsules of cryptozoological interest. Readers are encouraged to send in suitable items for possible use in the column.

New Turtle Record. The largest chelonian species known is the marine leatherback turtle, *Dermochelys coriacea*, the Indo-Pacific subspecies of which—*D. c. schlegelii*—has been thought to be the biggest. The record was held by a specimen of this subspecies, which weighed 1,908lb (865 kg) and measured 8 feet, 4 inches (2.54 m). It was caught alive in Monterey Bay, California, in August of 1961 (see Wood's Animal Facts, Newsletter, Summer, 1984).

However, this record has recently been surpassed by a specimen of the Atlantic subspecies, *D. c. coriacea*, indicating that there is probably little difference in size between the two subspecies. The record was broken on September 23, 1988, when an enormous leatherback turtle was found dead on a beach in Wales. Now on permanent display in the National Museum of Wales, the giant weighed 2,016lb (916 kg), and had a total length of 9 feet, 5.5 inches (2.87 m). Its flipper span was 9 feet (2.7 m), and its curved carapace length was 8 feet, 5 inches (2.56 m)—1 inch (2.5 cm) longer than the entire length of the previous record-holder.

The cause of death was found to be drowning—a piece of ingested plastic may have been a contributing factor. How much bigger might it have grown had it not died? Might there be other, larger leatherback turtles in the oceans? Who knows?

Prairie Rary. For many years, Paul Hammond, an Oregon State University entomologist, has been searching for species thought extinct in the Willamette Valley, a large basin located between the Cascade and Coastal Ranges of Oregon. Many species have become extinct there, it is thought, because of the drastic reduction of the area's prairie ecosystem; some ecologists say that less than 1 percent of original prairie survives there.

Despite this, Dr. Hammond has redis-

covered one of the six Valley butterflies believed extinct: Fender's blue butterfly, *Icaricia icarioides fenderi*, a subspecies which has not been scientifically recorded since the 1930's. He first located a colony of about 600 individuals near the McDonald Forest, near Corvallis. Other, smaller populations were later found in six other western Oregon locations.

With a blue (male) and brown (female) 1-inch (2.5 cm) wingspan, the butterfly's peril is linked to the decline of Kincaid's lupine, a blue-colored wildflower found only in the Valley. Now that it has been rediscovered, plans are under way to petition the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list this invertebrate form as threatened.

Nebulous Nepalese Felid. The rare, beautiful, and little-known clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*) of southeast Asia has been extinct in the Kingdom of Nepal since 1863—or so it was thought until recently. In October, 1989, Eric Dinnerstein and Jai N. Mehta reported in the British conservation journal Oryx (Vol. 23[4]: 199-201) that, during fieldwork in 1987-1988, they established the presence in Nepal of at least four individuals of this species, one of which was successfully radio-collared.

Two clouded leopard cubs were first captured alive near Janakpur, in southeastern Nepal, and taken to the Katmandu Zoo. The mother was thought to have been killed by villagers. Later, another individual was stoned to death near Pokhara, several hundred miles to the northwest. The specimen was later recovered and deposited with a local museum.

Further south, near Butwal, a sub-adult male was fortunately captured alive by villagers; this is the one which was radio-collared, the first time that zoologists have been able to conduct this monitoring procedure on a clouded leopard. However, after 2 weeks of successful monitoring—during which much behavioral data was acquired—official restrictions on telemetry in the area prevented monitoring for 2 weeks, after which contact was never re-established.

These recent discoveries have demonstrated that clouded leopards may thrive in degraded dry woodlands—quite differ-

ent from the moist tropical forests of its Southeast Asia habitat—and have extended the cat's range much further to the northwest than previously thought. For cryptozoology, of course, it is simply another example of how little we know about the behavior—or even the existence in certain areas—of some of the larger terrestrial mammals.

Giant Octopus Strikes Again. One of the luminaries of cryptozoological lore is the giant octopus, rarely reported but often debated (see Newsletter, Autumn, 1985). In late December, 1989, a new report was carried over the Associated Press wires from the Philippines. The report stated that a motorized craft had been attacked and overturned by a giant octopus in Iligan Bay, about 490 miles (788 km) southeast of Manila.

"Suddenly, the waters began to bubble," stated Agapito Caballero, one of the witnesses. "Then, with the use of a flashlight, we saw something that looked like a giant octopus. It was as huge as an imported cow." His brother, Alfredo, stated that the cephalopod attached itself to the pontoons of the craft, overturning it. The 12 occupants were not attacked, and the octopus then reportedly submerged. All were rescued the next day by fishermen—except for Alfredo's baby son, whose body was later recovered 17 miles away.

No further details are available. Was the giant octopus really a "giant"—that is, an unknown species? Or was it a large specimen of a known species? How large is an "imported cow"? Is that for the body only, or would it include the radial spread of the arms? We shall probably never have answers to these questions. All we can assume is that an octopus large enough to tip over a pontoon craft carrying 12 people must have indeed been of large size and strength.

Ants in Her Plants. While many zoologists undergo hardships to locate and study new species of animals, some find it ridiculously easy. For Kathryn S. Fuller, it took no more than routinely sitting at her desk in—of all places—the Washington headquarters of the American branch of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF—now World Wide Fund for Nature in other countries): for Fuller happens to be the president of the American branch of WWF.

The story began when she first noticed ants crawling on her desk in 1989. In 1990, while talking with WWF Board member Edward O. Wilson, the well-known Harvard University ant expert (and strong proponent of sociobiological theory), she asked him to check out her ants. "Ed's eyebrows just shot up when he saw them," she later reported. Dr. Wilson, who had just completed a comprehensive volume entitled The Ants, was immediately able to identify the specimens as members of the South American genus *Pheidole*. But he was unable to identify the species. Locating

the colony in a potted palm behind Fuller's desk, he collected some worker ants to take back to Harvard, and later requested that some soldier ants also be sent to him.

Dr. Wilson's startling conclusion was that the ants in the plantpot of the president of WWF/USA represented a completely new species for zoology, one which he intends to describe and name after Fuller. In an official WWF news release, he called the discovery "a very surprising find and certainly distinctive."

As for President Fuller, she stated: "I will feel a very personal sense of responsibility for these ants, whether or not they're named after me."

It is still a mystery how the ants got to Washington from South America. They may have arrived with the palm from Florida, or they may have arrived on some other plant and then transferred to the palm. Another cryptic puzzle. Meanwhile, besides her other duties, President Fuller is said to be keeping the ants happy with sugar water, apple cores, and cheese. □

CRYPTOLETTERS

To the Editor:

I would like to report to you that, in the summer of 1989, I witnessed what appeared to be an Eastern puma in the Francis Marion National Forest, which consists of approximately 250,000 acres (101,170 ha) of coastal plain forest located 20 miles (32 kl) north of Charleston, South Carolina.

I have since located another witness, Roy Belcher, who saw a female with two cubs in the same area. I am a criminal investigator with the South Carolina State Police, and Mr. Belcher is a well-educated member of a local forestry consulting firm. We are both certain of what we saw.

L.G. Faircloth
Huger, South Carolina, U.S.A.

To the Editor:

I have followed Sasquatch reports for several years, and when I lived in Alaska I knew an Aleut woman who had grown up in Iliamna. This is a village on the north shore of Lake Iliamna, the second largest lake--in volume--in the United

States.

My Aleut friend talked a number of times about a huge human-like creature that came to the opened door of her family's cabin during the summer of 1936 or 1937, when she was a child. Her parents were gone at the time, and she was alone, playing with some toys. The thing was so large it had to bend way down just to look inside the cabin. She did not see its face, as it was blocking out the sunlight, making the inside of the cabin dark. She said it stank like wolverine musk--which I have since been told by a trapper is as unpleasant as skunk musk--and was covered by long, brownish-red hair.

She said it stayed at the doorway for a little while, until there was a whistle from one of the other similar creatures prowling the nearby garbage dump. She said that several of the creatures had come down that day from the mountains. They communicated with each other by whistling, but did not talk. She told her parents about the incident when they returned. They explained that these creatures lived in the mountains and would sometimes go down and prowl, looking for food. However, they did not appear regularly or often.

These sightings have been going on between Lake Iliamna and Lake Clark,

but there has never been a report of the animals killing or injuring a human. I am disappointed with the National Geographic Society for not having sent a group into this part of Alaska.

In July, 1990, I flew to Iliamna, and stayed there several days renewing old acquaintances. I told a long trek out onto the tundra north of the lake, and covered the area from Newhalen back to Iliamna. I had a camera with a telephoto lens with me in the hope that I might get lucky--I figured all the brown and grizzly bears would be over at the Newhalen River hunting the king salmon spawning in the shallows. I encountered nothing of significance, except old Russian cemeteries and several hundred salmon in the lake.

It would probably require a well-financed expedition of at least four persons covering the mountains north of Iliamna in order to find evidence of these Sasquatch. I know a man who has lived in that area for 6 years who might be willing to act as a guide. If anybody is interested in helping to finance an expedition, I may be contacted at: 319 Huffhines, Apt. 4, Richardson, Texas 75081.

Ken Clark
Richardson, Texas, U.S.A.

The ISC Newsletter is not issued for permanent scientific record, and thus, for the purposes of zoological nomenclature, does not fulfill the criteria for publication as defined in the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature.

Archival Material: Members are urged to send to the ISC Secretariat copies of cryptozoology-related newspaper reports, popular magazine articles, and scientific papers. Recently published material is particularly welcome, but old and obscure items are also of interest. It is better for the Secretariat to have two or three copies of an article than none at all; so, when in doubt, send. All submissions should clearly indicate a full reference; e.g. name of publication, date, and--in the case of scientific papers--volume and page numbers. In most cases, because of the volume of mail, members will not receive an acknowledgment of receipt, but all items submitted are carefully read, are often used in the Newsletter, and are preserved for posterity.

WOOD'S ANIMAL FACTS

The largest rodent in the world is the capybara or water cavy (*Hydrochaerus hydrochaeris*), which reaches its maximum size in the tropical rain forests of South America. Mature specimens (females are larger) have a head and body length of 3 feet, 4 inches-4 feet, 6 inches (1.02-1.37m), and usually scale 110-121lb (50-55kg), but much heavier weights have been recorded for captive animals.

According to Zara (1972), the largest male and female in a small breeding group at Evansville Zoo, Indiana, U.S.A., weighed 117lb (53kg) and 174lb (79kg) respectively. The smaller subspecies *Hydrochaerus hydrochaeris isthmus* of Panama, Central America, is about half this size.

The only mammals capable of sustained flight are bats (Chiroptera), of which there are about 950 living species. They are found throughout the world with the exception of certain remote oceanic islands and the polar regions.

The largest bat in terms of wingspan is probably the Bismarck flying fox (*Pteropus neohibernicus*) of the Bismarck Archipelago and New Guinea. One specimen collected near Lae, northeast New Guinea, in July, 1959, and now preserved in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, has a head and body length of 17.9 inches (455 mm), and measures 5 feet, 5 inches (1,650mm) across the outstretched wings. Peterson (1964) says he collected others of the same species measuring "well over five feet, six inches," and added that he was firmly convinced that a 6-foot

(1,830mm) specimen would be discovered one day.

The large flying fox (*P. vampyrus*) of southern Burma, Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines, and the Indian flying fox (*P. giganteus*) have also been credited with measurements in excess of 5 feet (1,520mm) and weights up to 3lb, 1oz (1.38kg) and 3lb, 7oz (1.54kg) respectively, and the wingspread of *Acerodon jubatus* of the Philippines, which externally is indistinguishable from *Pteropus*, is given as 4 feet, 11.5in-5ft, 3in (1,510-1,600mm) by Walker *et al.* (1968).

Abstracted from:

The Guinness Book of Animal Facts and Feats, by Gerald L. Wood, Guinness Superlatives, Enfield, U.K. (3rd ed.), 1982.

Field Medical Advisor: Michael J. Manyak, M.D., Department of Urology, George Washington University Medical Center, 2150 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

Honorary Members: Andre Capart (Belgium); Marjorie Courtenay-Latimer (South Africa); John Green (Canada); The Lord Hunt of Llanfair Waterdine (U.K.); Marie-Jeanne Koffmann (U.S.S.R.); Ingo Krumbiegel (Germany); Theodore Monod (France); Robert Titmus (Canada).

Benefactors: G.A. Buder, III (U.S.A.); Robert C. Dorion (Guatemala); Michael T. Martin (U.S.A.); Gale J. Raymond (U.S.A.); Hugh H. Trotti, Jr. (U.S.A.); Kurt Von Nieda (U.S.A.); Edward B. Winn (Switzerland); Bette Wolfskill (U.S.A.); Count F.C. Zedlitz (Argentina).

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